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SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION
COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)
Agenda item 84

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

Austria*: draft resolution

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/67 of 14 December 1992,

Deeply convinced of the common interest of mankind in promoting the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and in continuing efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived therefrom, and of the importance of international cooperation in this field, for which the United Nations should continue to provide a focal point,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation in developing the rule of law, including the relevant norms of space law and their important role in international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Concerned about the possibility of an arms race in outer space,

Recognizing that all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, should contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Considering that space debris is an issue of concern to all nations,

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* On behalf of the Working Group on International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

Noting the progress achieved in the further development of peaceful space exploration and application as well as in various national and cooperative 1/ space projects, which contribute to international cooperation, and the importance of further international cooperation in this field,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General 2/ on implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, 3/

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its thirty-sixth session, 4/

1. Endorses the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; 4/

2. Invites States that have not yet become parties to the international treaties governing the uses of outer space 5/ to give consideration to ratifying or acceding to those treaties;

3. Notes that, at its thirty-second session, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in its working groups, continued its work as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/67; 6/

1/ Cooperative projects during the year under review include the Brazilian data collection satellite, SCD-1, the Portuguese experimental satellite, PO-SAT-1, the Indian multi-purpose satellite, INSAT-2B, the Italian environmental micro-satellite, TEMISAT, and the German Spacelab Mission, D-2 and the Astro-spas retrieval satellite.

2/ A/48/365.

3/ See Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna, 9-21 August 1982 (A/CONF.101/10 and Corr.1 and 2).

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/48/20).

5/ Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 222 (XXI), annex); Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (resolution 2345 (XXII), annex); Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (resolution 2777 (XXVI), annex); Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (resolution 3235 (XXIX)); Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 34/68, annex).

6/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/48/20), sect. II C.

4. Endorses the recommendations of the Committee that the Legal Subcommittee, at its thirty-third session, taking into account the concerns of all countries, particularly those of developing countries, should:

(a) Continue, through its working group, its consideration of the question of early review and possible revision of the principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space;

(b) Continue, through its working group, its consideration of matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and to the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, including consideration of ways and means to ensure the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union;

(c) Continue, through its working group, its consideration of the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries;

5. Notes that deliberations on the question of the geostationary orbit were undertaken by the Legal Subcommittee, as reflected in its report, 6/ on the basis of recent proposals which might provide a new and enhanced basis for future work;

6. Endorses the recommendations and agreements concerning the organization of work in the Legal Subcommittee;

7. Notes that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, at its thirtieth session, continued its work as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/67; 7/

8. Welcomes the decision of the Committee to consider the matter of space debris, and endorses the recommendation that a new item, entitled "Space debris", should be added to the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee beginning with its next session;

9. Endorses the agreement of the Committee that, under this item, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee would consider scientific research relating to space debris, including relevant studies, mathematical modelling and other analytical work on the characterization of the space debris environment;

10. Also endorses the recommendations of the Committee that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its thirty-first session, taking into account the concerns of all countries, particularly those of developing countries, should:

(a) Consider the following items on a priority basis:

7/ Ibid., sect. II B.

(i) United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the coordination of space activities within the United Nations system;

(ii) Implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; 2/

(iii) Matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellites, including inter alia, applications for developing countries;

(iv) Use of nuclear power sources in outer space;

(b) Consider the following items:

(i) Space debris;

(ii) Questions relating to space transportation systems and their implications for future activities in space;

(iii) Examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit; examination of its utilization and applications, including, in the field of space communications, as well as other questions relating to space communications developments, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries;

(iv) Matters relating to life sciences, including space medicine;

(v) Progress in national and international space activities related to the Earth's environment, in particular progress in the geosphere-biosphere (global change) programme;

(vi) Matters relating to planetary exploration;

(vii) Matters relating to astronomy;

(viii) The theme fixed for special attention at the 1994 session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee: "Space applications for disaster prevention, warning, mitigation and relief". The Committee on Space Research and the International Astronautical Federation, in liaison with Member States, should be invited to arrange a symposium, with as wide a participation as possible, to be held during the first week of the Subcommittee's session, to complement discussions within the Subcommittee on the special theme;

11. Considers, in the context of paragraph 10 (a) (ii) above, that it is particularly urgent to implement the following recommendations:

(a) All countries should have the opportunity to use the techniques resulting from medical studies in space;

(b) Data banks at the national and regional levels should be strengthened and expanded and an international space information service should be established to function as a centre of coordination;

(c) The United Nations should support the creation of adequate training centres at the regional level, linked, whenever possible, to institutions implementing space programmes; necessary funding for the development of such centres should be made available through financial institutions;

(d) The United Nations should organize a fellowship programme through which selected graduates or postgraduates from developing countries should get in-depth, long-term exposure to space technology or applications; it is also desirable to encourage the availability of opportunities for such exposure on other bilateral or multilateral bases outside the United Nations system;

12. Endorses the recommendation of the Committee that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should reconvene, at its thirty-first session, the Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, to continue its work;

13. Also endorses the recommendations of the Working Group of the Whole of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, as endorsed by the Committee and as contained in the report of the Working Group of the Whole; 8/

14. Decides that, during the thirty-first session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space should be reconvened, and invites Member States to report to the Secretary-General on a regular basis with regard to national and international research concerning the safety of nuclear-powered satellites;

15. Endorses the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for 1994, as proposed to the Committee by the Expert on Space Applications; 9/

16. Emphasizes the urgency and importance of implementing fully the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

17. Reaffirms its approval of the recommendation of the Conference regarding the establishment and strengthening of regional mechanisms of cooperation and their promotion and creation through the United Nations system;

18. Expresses its appreciation to all Governments that have made or expressed their intention to make contributions towards carrying out the recommendations of the Conference;

19. Invites all Governments to take effective action for the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference;

8/ A/AC.105/542, annex II.

9/ A/AC.105/533, sects. I and III.

20. Requests all organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations working in the field of outer space or on space-related matters to cooperate in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference;

21. Invites the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference;

22. Notes that, pursuant to the request of the General Assembly contained in paragraph 20 of its resolution 47/67 of 14 December 1992, the Committee discussed the possibility of holding a third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in the future, and requests the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to continue these discussions at its thirty-first session with a view to promoting an early conclusion on the matter by the Committee;

23. Agrees that the most important step is to define a set of sharply focused objectives for such a conference and that details such as organization, venue, timing and funding should also be considered;

24. Notes that the goals set for such a conference might also be achieved through other means including intensification of work within the Committee;

25. Recognizes the contribution of the Second Space Conference of the Americas, held at Santiago, Chile, in 1993, and the Asia-Pacific Workshop on Multilateral Cooperation in Space Technology and Applications, held at Beijing in 1992, towards promoting regional cooperation in space activities, as well as the meetings mentioned in paragraph 13 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; 1/

26. Recommends that more attention be paid to all aspects related to the protection and the preservation of the outer space environment, especially those potentially affecting the Earth's environment;

27. Considers that it is essential that Member States pay more attention to the problem of collisions of space objects, including nuclear power sources, with space debris, and other aspects of space debris, and calls for the continuation of national research on this question, for the development of improved technology for the monitoring of space debris and for the compilation and dissemination of data on space debris and that, to the extent possible, information thereon should be provided to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee;

28. Notes with interest the analytical report prepared by the Secretariat on the role that the Committee could play in view of the decisions and recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and

Development 10/ and agrees that it could make an important contribution to the Committee's future work in this area;

29. Requests the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to review the report at its next session and consider further how the Committee might best promote the effective use of space technology, on the basis of international cooperation, for environmental monitoring and sustainable development;

30. Requests the Secretariat to provide the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee with updated information on the implementation of Agenda 21 by the United Nations system, with information on activities of the Programme on Space Applications related to environment and development, and with suggestions as to how the activities of the Programme on Space Applications in this area might be expanded;

31. Recommends that permanent observer status to the Committee be granted to the Association of Space Explorers, on the understanding that, in accordance with the agreement of the Committee at its thirty-first session concerning observer status for non-governmental organizations, 11/ the Association would apply for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council;

32. Notes that, in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, the Office for Outer Space Affairs has been relocated to the United Nations Office at Vienna and that, as part of that restructuring, the Office for Outer Space Affairs would be responsible for servicing the Committee, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee and their subsidiary bodies;

33. Endorses the agreement of the Committee that the meetings of the Committee and of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should be held at Vienna in accordance with the headquarters rule contained in General Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985 and that the thirty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee would be held at Vienna and that the venue for its subsequent meetings would be reviewed in the light of the 1994 session;

34. Urges all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and uses of outer space for peaceful purposes;

35. Emphasizes the need to increase the benefits of space technology and its applications and to contribute to an orderly growth of space activities favourable to the socio-economic advancement of humanity, in particular that of the people of the developing countries;

10/ A/AC.105/547.

11/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 20.

36. Takes note of the views expressed during the thirty-sixth session of the Committee and during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly concerning ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes;

37. Requests the Committee to continue to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session;

38. Also requests the Committee to continue to consider, at its thirty-seventh session, its agenda item entitled "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status";

39. Requests the specialized agencies and other international organizations to continue and, where appropriate, enhance their cooperation with the Committee and to provide it with progress reports on their work relating to the peaceful uses of outer space;

40. Welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation in space activities for enhancing security in the post-cold-war era 12/ and calls on the competent bodies to take into account its contents;

41. Requests the Committee to continue its work, in accordance with the present resolution, to consider, as appropriate, new projects in outer space activities and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session, including its views on which subjects should be studied in the future.

12/ A/48/221.